



TRI-TOWN AMBULANCE

West Tisbury • Chilmark • Aquinnah

Chief Ben Retmier, Tri-Town Ambulance Chief
P.O. Box 457 West Tisbury, MA. 02575
PHONE/FAX: 508-693-4992
Email: ttemschief@Vineyard.net

Tri-Town Ambulance Committee February 1, 2017 Meeting Minutes

The meeting was called to order by Committee Chair Jim Newman at 12:08 p.m.

In attendance

Richard Knabel, Committee Member, Warren Doty, Committee Member, Jim Newman, Committee Member, Chief Retmier, Deputy Chief Matthew Montanile, Allison Graczykowski, Admin Assistant

- **Approval of January 4th, 2017 Meeting Minutes**

Committee Member Richard Knabel moved to approve the January 4th, 2017 meeting minutes. Committee Member Warren Doty seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

- **Old Business**

Jim Newman shared that he and Chief Retmier did not hold an additional meeting as there were no new warrant articles to be addressed.

Committee Member Warren Doty shared that the town meeting is being held on April 25th. Once the purchase of new vehicles is approved, the process of purchasing will begin about May 1, 2017. The process will take approximately 90-120 possibly 160 days. Tri-Town Ambulance may potentially have a new vehicle by Thanksgiving.

Chief Retmier is reaching out to two other vendors for quotes to ensure compliance with the purchase process. Chief Retmier shared that he is meeting with one company next Monday. The company name is New England Fire Apparatus.

- **New Business**

Committee Member Warren Doty shared that when the final budget was presented to the towns that the numbers were a little bit different due to increase on health insurance and workmen's compensation. Tri-Town Ambulance Committee will revote the budget. Workmen's compensation increased from \$18,000.00 to \$20,000.00 and health insurance had a significant increase of \$28,000.00. The overall budget increase is now 4% instead of the 1% previously approved. Committee member Richard Knabel motioned to approve the amended budget and Committee Chair Jim Newman seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Committee Member Richard Knabel went to a MMA workshop two weeks ago in Boston that reviewed different responses to the opioid epidemic crisis. Richard shared that he attended the workshop to learn more. Richard Knabel asked Chief Retmier if he has the number of overdoses and fatalities. Chief Retmier offered that all the data is sent to Matris and a variety of organizations can access Matris and pull the data. Chief Retmier added that he has shared Tri-Town numbers with local newspapers and the Young Doctors from UMass.

Committee Member Jim Newman asked Chief Retmier if he could break out that category for the Committee's monthly meetings. Chief Retmier responded that he could and going forward will have that information available.

Committee Member Richard Knabel shared that he learned of a Task Force Initiative which operates like an intervention right after an overdose occurs. Lowell reported 60 fatalities in 2016 and that number trended down after the task force was implemented.

Chief Retmier's take away is to pull data going back 3-5 years regarding overdoses in the Tri-Town Service area.

TTA Chief Report

- **Three Month Review**

Chief Retmier shared that over the last three-month period Tri-Town Ambulance has had 73 calls, which is on track with last year during the same period.

Committee Member Warren Doty asked how the medical transportation assistance is going. Chief Retmier shared that there was a brief flurry of interest and then it died down.

- **Radio Communications Committee Report**

Chief Retmier shared that about a year ago, Chief Randhi Belain suggested that a governing body be formed. The governing body included all heads of public safety, emergency management and Sheriff's Department and met this past Monday. The governing body includes two representatives from Fire, Sheriff's Department, Police and one EMS representative. Chief Retmier stated that he is the EMS representative. The goal of the governing body is to control and guide radio communications on the Island. Chief Retmier shared they are looking at grants to improve the radio communications on the Island. The governing body is committed to improve infrastructure. Currently there are six sites throughout the Island that are connected to the Communications Center via copper land lines. The land lines are no longer serviceable. Verizon said they may service for up to two more years. They no longer install, sell or actively services these lines. Verizon has three crews for all New England that service these lines. There is a drive to go fiber and microwave. The committee has looked at varying options and they have determined that the best route is a microwave system. The system has a 99.0% rate of reliability. This is better than fiber optic and cable. The governing body is looking at doing an inventory of what each town has at various sites. Example, the water tower, the fire tower and what's at the coast guard tower, so they know what is available and what needs to be replaced. The short term 2-3-year plan is to upgrade infrastructure. The next phase is to upgrade the communications equipment at the sites and the communication center. The problem being faced is that if you upgrade radios they must be P25 compliant. The state has also said, that they will be doing an 800mghertz trunking system in possibly 10 years. By meeting the infrastructure goal and equipment goal, the Island would be ready for the State to tie into the system when they roll out the 800 Megahertz trunking system.

Committee Member Warren Doty is concerned about the Peaked Hill tower and expressed that there are neighbors that are vehemently opposed to microwave system. Chief Retmier shared that there will be no wires that it's all done through the air. Warren Doty wondered if the neighbors should have health concerns. Chief Retmier offered that there will be no health risk. Committee member Warren Doty shared that a resident hired a specialist that performed a study to determine ow far things need to be placed from a residence to eliminate health risk. That study was done at least ten years ago.

- **Comstar Annual Rate Increase**

Allison Graczykowski presented the suggested rate increases provided by Comstar Billing. The numbers that Comstar Billing provides are taken from their top 50 providers. The suggestion was to increase BLS runs by \$59.00, ALS runs by \$98.00 and Mileage would increase by .51 cents per mile.

Warren Doty motioned to pass the rate increases as proposed, and Richard Knabel seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

- **Comstar Update**

Allison Graczykowski, Administrative Assistant reviewed the collections to date with the Committee. Collections continue to go well.

- **Next Meeting Date**

The next meeting will be held on March 8, 2017, 12:00 pm at the West Tisbury Fire Station on State Road, West Tisbury.

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- **Adjournment**

Motion to adjourn the meeting at 1:07 pm. and Committee member Warren Doty seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

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Prepared by: _____
Allison Graczykowski, Clerical Assistant